

V
THE
Reasonableness and Necessity
OF
SUBSCRIPTION
TO
Explanatory Articles of Faith

DEMONSTRATED;

IN TWO LETTERS;

The One to the Author of the CONFSSIONAL,

The other to the Late Mr. *Samuel Chandler*,
now re-published.

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MERITIS EXPENDITE CAUSAM.

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P R E F A C E.

THE Author has been requested by many of his Friends, especially among the *Clergy*, to Re-publish his Letter to Mr. *Chandler*; which has been judged to be a sufficient Answer to what is *Substantial* in the Controversy about *Subscription to Explanatory Articles of Religion*; which Controversy has been revived, in a Book intituled, *The Confessional*: And, that the Argument for such Subscription contained in that Letter is clearly decisive of the Question concerning Subscription; this is what he could truly say has been the Opinion of some whose Judgment cannot be slighted.

And, indeed, it must be acknowledged, that the Argument *does decide* the Question, if it shews, not only the *Reasonableness* and
a *Expediency*,

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Expediency, but, moreover, the *Necessity* of Subscription : For by debating the Question upon the foot of *Necessity*, the Controversy is reduced to a narrow Compass ; and the *Proof* of such *Necessity* does at once supersede, and put an end to, all Disputes in regard to the Fitness of requiring Subscription to Articles of Faith.

In Compliance with the above-mentioned Request, so far as the *main Argument* was concerned in it, my First Intention was, to Publish the *Argument* alleged in the Letter to Prove the *Necessity* of what is chiefly contended for against Mr. *Chandler*, and other Anti-subscriptionists, and to Omit every Thing which is not, strictly speaking, *Part* of that Argument : But, upon casting an Eye over the Letter, which has been dormant many Years, I found several Passages, in different Parts of it, which are immediately, and indeed almost inseparably, connected with the Question itself ; as particularly in Pages 36—40 : Where the Case of the Right to appoint Ceremonies in the Worship of God is treated of ; a Right which is one Branch of the Authority of the Church, which requires Subscription ; and the Exercise

cise of this Right is, in some Respects, liable to the same Objections as those which are usually urged *against* Subscription; and, therefore, a Vindication of the One, is, in some measure, a Vindication of the Other also. Such Authority is properly an *Ecclesiastical Power*, though it be exercised by the Civil Magistrate, or has the sanction of the Laws of the State. In Pages 40—43, the Reader will find several, and those, it is hoped, Useful Distinctions, in regard to the Terms *Right* and *Justify*, which have been perpetually applied in a fallacious and delusive Sense in the Question concerning the Being, or the Measure and Extent, of Church Authority, and of which the Author of the *Confessional* Himself, after the Example of his Forerunners in the same Cause, has made a *proper* Use, as shall be shewn in due Place. In Pages 48—51, the Case of *Unscriptural Expressions* is considered; which Article is very material in the Debate about Subscription. There are, besides, many Things in the Letter to Mr. *Chandler*, which may seem to have so close a Connection with, or at least to bear such a Relation to, the Point

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of Subscription to Explanatory Articles of Religion, that they can hardly be omitted without Injury to the Question.—Upon these and other Accounts, I have thought proper to Re-publish my Letter to Mr. *Chandler* Intire, and without any material Defalcation; and the Desire of some, who preferred in their Opinion my publishing the Whole Letter, instead of only Extracting from it what is directly and immediately pertinent to the Argument; and, moreover, the Consideration of the very favourable Reception which this Letter met with from the Public in its former Editions; may suffice for my Justification in so doing.

Who the Author of the *Confessional* is, does not publicly appear. He chuses, we see, to lie hid by not telling his name, and to whom he belongs: But if it will provoke him to come out fairly from his dark Recess, and to shew his Face in open Daylight, I will speak out boldly, and tell him plainly that there is no assignable Reason for his Delitescence under the Cover of Anony-
mous, which has not more of Prudence than of True Courage in it. Whoever he be, of
this

non quis, sed quid.

this I am very certain; that he may not improperly be called *Diotrephes*. For, in the first Place, he appears to be *Unwilling to receive Us or our Doctrine*, since he rejects that Authority in Matters of Religion which is derived from *Christ* and his *Apostles*, by treating it as the *Invention* and *Imposition* of Men. In the next Place, he seems to be willing, very willing, to set up an *Authority of his Own*, to the Demolition of *Creeds*, and *Articles* and *Confessions of Faith*: For he who impugns and represents them as such mighty Evils as the Author of the *Confessional* does, cannot be supposed *not* to be very willing that they should be removed, and that some *Invention* or other of *his own* should take place in their stead; and thus *He loves, like Diotrephes, to have the Prebeminence*.

Having passed these few Ceremonies, we now part; but shall meet again presently.— I now turn myself to speak a few words more in regard to the *Re-publication* of my Letter to Mr. *Chandler* on this Occasion. And this may be very proper, before I proceed any farther with this new Acquaintance,

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in order to dispossess the minds of some Readers of a Prejudice, which may be in their thoughts, and take off from that Candour and Attention with which they might otherwise peruse these Papers: And, besides this, even *Diotrephes* Himself, so far from having just Cause to be offended at my leaving him alone for a while, shall have some Reason to offer, if he can return a Civility, in *Excuse* for my Digression.

If, then, any-one should object that there is something of Unfairness in Re-publishing this Letter, now Mr. *Chandler* is dead, and cannot answer for himself; and also that there is too much of Asperity in the Style and Manner of writing against him; to the former of these Cavils I shall reply by observing, that the Letter was published *more than Twenty Years ago*, and that Mr. *Chandler* did not only know of it, by hearing more about it, than what, as I have Reason to believe, he liked to do; but, moreover, that He, the said Mr. *Chandler*, did with his own Eyes read the same; and that he did, for Reasons perhaps *best* known to himself, decline to attempt giving any Answer to the Letter

Letter.—In short, so far as I have ever heard of the Matter, if a Man may venture to tell the plain and artless Tale of Truth, there was one *good* Reason, among others, why he *did not* answer it; and that was—a Reason so very good, as to make all other Reasons of Silence e'en good for nothing. And this wholly removes all Ground for Complaint of Unfairness on my part, and all Room or Occasion for any By-stander to imagine that I am vainly putting on an Air of Triumph, or brandishing my Weapon now my Adversary is dead.

But where, after all, is the mighty Iniquity in writing against an Author, after he is dead? much less in Re-publishing a Book which he had seen, and had an Opportunity of answering. Every Man, who writes about Points of Moment, and supposes that what he writes will deserve Attention; supposes that his Work will live, and be read, after he is dead. The Good, or the Evil, which Men do by their Writings, lives after them. The Books which they leave behind them, remain living Sources of Truth or Error. *Toland* and *Tindal* are doing Mischief continually

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(if their Works are still extant): *Tillotson*, *Sherlock*, and other able Defenders of Religion, are conducting Souls to Heaven every Day. What, or where, then, is the Sense of pretending, that an Error, especially if it be a pernicious one, is not to be confuted, because the Author of it is dead? In a Word, if the false and dangerous Doctrines of a Writer are not to be confuted after he is dead, Why, then, does He teach or speak of them after He is dead? But, though He be *dead*, by His Writings *He yet speaketh*.

Though, then, Mr. *Chandler* be dead *naturally*, yet He is not dead *in Controversy*. He still lives and breathes, aye, and speaks too, in the brave *Diotrepbes*, the Renowned Champion of modern *Erastianism*.

Pantboïdes Euphorbus ERAT.—

He is now alive again; and I, his once Antagonist, will, in a Polemical Capacity, and as a Defender of the Church of England, be alive again too: And the same Argument, which was unanswerably strong against Mr. *Chandler*, and conclusive *then*, will be alike conclusive against Him, however transmigrated,

grated, or against any *Champion* (as he was pleased to style a Friend of mine) militant in the same Cause *now*.

The Enemies to all Power and Authority in the Church to require Subscription to explanatory Articles of Faith, as well as those who are Adversaries to the very Being of a Civil Establishment of Religion, are, in the Opinion of their Followers, as well as in their own Conceit, mighty Men. It is not, however, in *Argument* that their Strength lies. Certain Words, the *Shibboleth* of a Party, such as *Liberty, Conscience, Truth, Sincerity*, and the like, *properly* applied, and thrown out at *proper* Times and Places, among the Multitude, *the Many* made up of *many Minds*; the superficial Readers, and the simple-minded Hearers; these work Wonders, and, whatever Effect they may have upon Others, make Serious Men, who foresee and regard Consequences, look *very serious*. Ecclesiastical Authority has many Opposers, and loud and perpetual is the Declamation against the Imposition of *Creeds, Articles, and Subscriptions*. This is the favourite Topic of some Men, their darling Theme;

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Theme; and too many among the Credulous, are, 'tis feared, captivated, and imposed upon by *this Sort of Imposition*; are deceived and deluded by the Hypocritical Insinuations of the Pretenders to *Sincerity*; 'till they are at length led, by *the Love of Truth* and *the Liberty of Conscience*, to shake off all the Restraints of Authority, both Human and Divine; and are driven, through the dreadful Apprehension of being *imposed upon* by *Articles of Faith*, to *Subscribe, without Examination*, to every plausible Plea that is offered *against* Creeds and Articles of Religion; and, at last, for Fear of being over-credulous, or so unfashionable in an Infidel Age as to *believe too Much*, believe *Nothing*.

These Things are far from being Phantoms of my own raising: A very sensible Writer was not mistaken, when He observed, as he did not long since, and that very publicly, that “ there are recent
 “ elaborate Writings which strenuously attack
 “ all outward Establishments of Confessions
 “ of Faith and Doctrine—that, busy is the
 “ Spirit which strives to lay level our sacred
 “ Polity with Independency, and to degrade
 “ our

our Faith to *Arianism*; and that, amidst uncharitable Asperſion on the Living, and baſe trampling on the Aſhes of the venerable Dead." * This was ſpoken before a moſt reſpectable Auditory, as it is ſtyled in His excellent Diſcourſe with the greateſt Truth and Juſtice: And I dare ſay, that a Seminary of Learning, which, in Conjunction with Her renowned Siſter, can juſtly boaſt of, and glory in, Her ſteady and unſhaken Fidelity to the Cauſe of Chriſtianity; and, moreover, in Her perpetual Attachment to ſound Principles of Religious Polity; is, and muſt be, ſenſible of the Truth of this melancholy Obſervation. The *Danger of the Church* might once be the Fear of Men, *fearing where no Fear was*; but, if it be true, that, when the *Fortreſſes* and *Bulwarks* of a Church, (as its Creeds and Articles undoubtedly are) be at any Time in Danger, it cannot but be true, that That *Church* is, at ſuch Time, in Danger; and, if ſo, there can be

* A Sermon preached before the Univerſity of Oxford, on *Act-Sunday*, July the 9th, 1769, by MATTHEW FRAMPTON, LL. D.

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no good Reason for keeping the Thing a Secret, or for saying, *Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the Streets of Askelon.*—Our Enemies are numerous, and they are all of them of much the same Cast and Disposition; they all dance in the same Chorus,

—ἀλλήλων ἐπὶ καρπῷ χεῖρας ἔχοντες.

And therefore some Opposition to this Enmity against Our *Zion*, can by no Means be looked upon as unseasonable.

As to any Cavil, which may be raised against some Sharpness in the Manner of my Writing against Mr. *Chandler*, I have a Pardon to plead for it, from One, who, of all Men, had a Right to grant it. Mr. *Chandler* Himself wrote with Asperity, and with much Acrimony, against My *Friend*, before ever I set Pen to Paper in this Controversy; that is, He wrote in that Manner against Me. And surely, it can never be thought, that a Person of Mr. *Chandler's* mild and moderate Disposition and Temper, would disallow and not pardon *That* in Another, which he allowed so freely in Himself.

Besides

Besides, Mr. *Chandler* was a *Veteran* in Controversy, and by no means a Stranger to those Arts by which it is usually managed; as Two very eminent Divines, besides my Friend, who were singular Ornaments to that Church whose Establishment He disliked, woefully experienced; and, of Course, He must have known that Allowance is to be made for the *Polemical*, or *Agonistical* Style. It is observed by a celebrated Author, that Controversialists are *Gladiators* in their Way; and though a smart, yet gentle Touch may be of Use, now and then, to whet up an Antagonist, when He seems to be a little dull, or backward, through Sloth or Timidity, yet Blood ought never to be drawn, through any Ill-Will; much less ought Disputants to assault each other with Malice prepense. A supererogatory Zeal for an *unbounded Latitude* of Opinion in Religious Matters, and præter-natural Outcries against the *tyrannous Impositions* of *naughty Priestcraft* and *unchristian Authority*, and an unwearied Opposition to the unrelenting Spirit of *dread Hierarchy*, are excused in Mr. *Chandler*; but it requires nothing

nothing less than a Charity which *beareth all Things, believeth all Things, endureth all Things*, to pass over tamely His Representation of a Person as being of a bigotted Disposition, and a Temper tending towards a Desire to persecute those who differed from Him in Opinion, when the *very Reverse* of All this was *really the Truth*.

The Gentleman, who had the Misfortune to fall under Mr. *Chandler's* Displeasure, for writing a Defence of Subscription, which He did in a Pamphlet, intituled, "The Church of England Vindicated, in requiring Subscription from the Clergy to the XXXIX Articles;" which is One of the Pamphlets mentioned in the Title - Page of Mr. *Letter to Mr. Chandler*, was no other than the Learned and Judicious Editor of Dr. *Waterland's Posthumous Sermons*, in two Volumes, to which he prefixed a large Preface, highly worth the Perusal of all who are desirous of receiving Satisfaction, as to the Matter therein discussed; which is relative to the XXXIX Articles. Those Sermons were committed to his Care and Management, by the Doctor Himself, as was expected

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expected; and to my Knowledge, Dr. *Waterland* entertained a very high Opinion of Him. This Gentleman distinguished Himself when he was young at the University of *Cambridge*, in the Controversy about Dr. *Clarke's*, or rather, indeed, Sir *Isaac Newton's* Notions of *Space* and *Time*; which Controversy was on Foot soon after Dr. *Clarke's* Death. He also published some Pamphlets, and a few Sermons; but His chief Work was a Book intituled, *The Athanasian Creed, a Preservative against Heresies*. It was my Happiness to live many Years in the closest Intimacy with this worthy Person; and though we differed in Opinion about several Things, still the Friendship subsisting between Us was at all Times invariably the same: Nor did He ever appear to regard one Opinion more than another, but for the Sake of Truth; His sincere and diligent Enquiries after which, were prematurely put an end to, by the only Thing which could separate or divide us, Death.—As for his Character and Worthiness in all Relations—how shall I speak of him!—I feel my sentiments of his Virtues and good Qualities

Qualities too strong, too affecting, to attempt any Commendation !

*Incorrupta Fides, nudaque Veritas,
Quando ullum inveniet parem !*

In short, in his whole Life and Demeanour, he was, so far as can be reasonably expected to be true of any Man, blameless : In his Profession, He was excellently qualified in the proper Studies of it : As a *Metaphysician* and *Divine*, (and *True Metaphysic* is, as Dr. *Waterland* justly observes, *True Divinity*) to say nothing of His other Accomplishments in the Literary Way, I find myself almost tempted to say, He deserved to be con-classed with no less a man than His learned Namesake ; *Him*, I mean, who was *Rector* of *St. James's*.—I could not forbear, had the Thing been out of Season, taking this Opportunity of doing some Justice to the Character of my *Friend*, who was greatly misrepresented by his Adversary in this Controversy.

It is with real Sincerity that I can say, it was not Prejudice, or any wrong Affection, which moved me to write against
Mr.

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Mr. *Chandler*. This I mention, in order to obviate, or to remove, any Prejudice which some may possibly conceive against Me, on account of the Part which I have taken in the present Question. My Temper and Wish is, to do Good to all Men, and to make, if possible, Friends of all Mankind. The great Thing with Me, in all disputed, and in all disputable Points, is always the same with *Pilate's Question*, *What is THE Truth?* ——— The *Love of Truth* is a Thing, not only agreeable and delightful, but it is every Man's *Duty*. A Love of Truth, attended with what is the natural consequence, the correspondent effect, and genuine Offspring of it, that is, a sincere Search after it, and a Delight in the Contemplation of it, is necessarily an Object of Approbation to that All-perfect Being who is infinitely a Lover of Truth. It is a Thing which ought not to pass, as it has usually done, under the Notion of *bare Speculation*; for it is, in some Sense or Respect, truly *Practical* and *Moral* in itself. It is *Practical*, as being an *Action of the Mind*, and an Application of the Powers and Faculties of it; and, as it is a *right, fit, and reasonable Application* of them to their proper-

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per and *great Object*, it is certainly *Moral Virtue*: Which is an observation highly pertinent, now we are speaking of *Controversy*. — *Religious Liberty*, and *Freedom of Inquiry*, (a Liberty, which, I pray God, we may always enjoy!) I esteem and value, as a most desirable and amiable Blessing: And I abhor *Persecution*, and every Kind of *Religious*, as well as of *Civil Tyranny*; and This as heartily and unfeignedly, as ever did the best and most zealous Friend to the Protestant Cause, or the most strenuous Advocate for it against *Popery*. *Persecution* I detest, as being *unnatural, absurd, unreasonable, and unchristian*: And, moreover, I condemn it as being inconsistent and ineffectual, with respect to the only End, which can, with the least Pretence of good Purpose, be imagined for the Practice of it, the bringing Men to Truth; since the genuine and direct Tendency of it, is, not to proselyte Men to Truth, but to confirm Them in their Error. The Compulsion of *Persecution* may make Men Hypocrites, but it is the Force of Truth only, which can make them Converts. My own Heart assures Me, that I am so far removed from any Thing that is favourable to *Persecution*, either in Theory or in Practice,

Practice, that I do not so much as dislike any Man, because his Opinion is different from mine ; and though, indeed, I could never see many Things in the same Light as that in which Mr. *Chandler* viewed them, yet far is it from Me to entertain any Prejudice against him, or to be willing to under-rate what he did *well*. — So far am I from being disposed to depreciate his Writings, that I do readily admit and acknowledge, that, whenever his Imagination, which was warm and lively, was not under the delusive Influence of those fearful *Mormo's*, and dire *Chimæra's* of *Priestcraft*, *Impositions*, *Persecutions*, (*Nocturni Lemures*, *Portentaque Thessala !*) and other visionary Terrors, where there was no real Danger, He was a reasonable Man enough ; and that, by the Strength of good natural Parts, a diligent Application to the Study of the Holy Scriptures, and a competent Share of Learning and Knowledge, His Writings against Infidelity have done considerable Service to the Cause of Revealed Religion.

The Declaration of a Writer in Testimony of his own Sincerity, may be thought to be of little Account, because whether

he be really sincere or not in that Declaration, may be still the Question. It is certain, indeed, that the Sincerity or Insincerity of a Writer does not affect the Argument which he proposes, when he is reasoning, not from *Matter of Fact*, but from the *Nature of Things*: However, it may be not amiss for him to declare his Attachment to Truth, and to nothing but Truth, if it be only for the Sake of removing Prejudices, which lie against the Cause he espouses; and (such is the Infirmary of Human Nature!) will therefore reach to and affect him, the Defender of it; and, of Course, be a Reason, why the Argument, which he proposes, will make the less Impression upon the Minds of those whom it is intended to convince or to confute. In order that an Argument may have its due Weight and Influence, and be heard with Attention and Regard, it is of great Use that it appear in a proper Light, and be received and considered with Impartiality and equitable Judgment. Upon this Account, it is expedient to endeavour to take off, as far as is possible, the Prejudices which have been conceived against it, which are a great Cause of Inattention to it, of wrong Discernment, and
erroneous

erroneous Judgment : And perhaps it is not easy to name that Question, the affirmative Side of which has higher Prejudices against it, or has been opposed with more passionate Zeal by the Enemies to *sound Doctrine*, than that Side of the Question which it is the Business of these Papers to defend. I have many Things to say, whereby it would appear how little Reason there is in Objections arising from those Prejudices, and how much Reason there is for throwing aside those Prejudices themselves ; and though they are fully answered and superseded in Point of *Reason*, by the Argument which proves the *Necessity* for Subscription, yet perhaps they may be taken into Consideration in some other Place. I shall drop that Matter at present, being unwilling to detain the Reader any longer from the Argument for Subscription, by adding any Thing to what has been already offered in a *Prefatory* or *Introductory* Way, except it be a few Words as to the Occasion of the present Defence of Subscription.

The Controversy about Subscription was revived by the *Confessional*. Several Pieces have appeared on the contrary Side of the Question, in Defence of Subscription, and from able Hands. I have had no Leisure
or

or Opportunity to peruse them, otherwise it had certainly been my Choice to read them; and that not only for the Sake of many Things, which would have probably been of Use for my Instruction, but for the Honour I bear the learned and worthy Authors. However, an Inquiry into what they have written upon the Subject was not *absolutely necessary* to my present Purpose, if Credit may be given to some judicious Persons of my Acquaintance. It is often seen, that different Writers on the same Side of a Question take different Ways, or pursue different Manners, of confuting a common Adversary; *one Man after this Manner, another Man after that Manner*. My Design and Business is to put the Question upon the Foot of the *Necessity* for Subscription, and that in a Way which is strictly and closely Argumentative, and in the plainest and most concise Manner, in which I am able to dispute about it. — If it be asked, (since the *Confessional* has been sent abroad from the Press a considerable Time, and several Authors have appeared against it,) “Why do I publish so late in the Controversy?” my Answer shall be, That it is more than I know that it is *late* in the Controversy. On the other hand, it seems to me

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to be probable, that the Controversy is not yet
risen to the highest Pitch of it. It is not
long since the Press was *happily* delivered of
some Proposals for an Application to the
Convocation—I mistake—it was to the *Par-*
liament, “ for Relief in the Matter of Sub-
scription to the Liturgy and Thirty-Nine
Articles of the Church of England, hum-
bly submitted to the Consideration of the
Learned and conscientious Clergy of the said
Church:” And printed Papers have been dis-
tributed, in great Plenty, in Fartherance of the
great and important Project of the Illustrious
Authors of those Proposals; and that to Per-
sons of high Station and Authority: And the
Confessional itself has been re-printed, with
answers, both in the Preface and the Mar-
gin of the Book, to Objections made against
; from whence it may be concluded, that
the Author did not think himself confuted,
but that he persisted, and was minded to go
on persisting, in that, which, when he has
fairly confuted what shall be produced against
him, he shall have my Leave, to call *Truth*.
And, as to the Apologists for Subscription, it
may be said, without any Detraction from the
Learning and Abilities of those who have al-
ready appeared in the Debate, that, by the
vague,

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vague, plausible, and fallacious Way of writing of the Author of the *Confessional*, fitted to deceive the Inattentive, and to confirm the prejudiced Reader in his wrong Opinions, it is more than I am sure of, that he has not so cloathed Error with the Garb of Truth, but it may still be Matter of Doubt, with many, on which Side of the Debate the Advantage lies. Of this, however, I am very sure, That to *demonstrate the Necessity of Subscription to Explanatory Articles of Faith*, is to *decide the Question*.



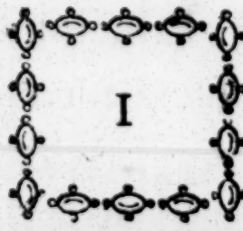
A

LETTER

TO THE

Author of the **CONFSSIONAL**.

S I R,

 IN a Letter written to Mr. Samuel Chandler, many Years ago, I proposed an Argument to prove the *Necessity of Subscription to Explanatory Articles of Faith*; and I find, that you, in your Book intitled *The Confessional*, do deny, not only the *Necessity*,
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but even the *Reasonableness* of such *Subscription*. This is a Fact which ought not, and which, it may be presumed, will not, because it cannot, consistently with plain and evident Fact, be denied. That Letter is now re-published, for Reasons which appear in the foregoing Preface ; to which may be added, that, by the Re-publication of that Letter, both a Repetition of Words, and the making of References from one Letter to another, are avoided. To do what is already done, is but needless and tedious Work ; and, as I have a fit Weapon for my Purpose already in my Hands, there is no Occasion for me to make, or to furnish another.—There is no real Impropriety in the Application of what was originally written to one Person, especially if it be Matter of Argument, to another, who is under the same Circumstances with the former, as maintaining the same Opinions or Principles. However, if you entertain any Doubt concerning the Propriety of such Application, or think that the Letter can concern Mr. *Chandler* only, the short Answer to you shall be, in the Words of *Nathan* to *David*, THOU ART THE MAN.

Before

Before I make the intended Application of my Argument in Form, there are some Things which are necessary to be spoken to in a preliminary Way; and which, for the Sake of doing Justice to the Cause I have the Honour to espouse, shall not be omitted.

It is, and must needs be, a great Obstruction to forming a right Judgment of the Force of Reasoning in any Case, to intermix with it Suggestions, or Insinuations, which tend to create Prejudices in the Minds of Readers. A remarkable Instance to this Purpose, is, that Insinuation, which is so often to be met with in your Performance, that Pleading in behalf of Creeds and Articles, has no unfavourable Aspect upon the Cause of *Popery*. For this Reason, I shall take particular Notice of this Piece of Unfairness in your Manner of representing Things, and hope that what shall be offered will be of Use in removing Prejudices, to the End that some Readers may be the more able to exercise a free and impartial Judgment in the present Question. The very Name of *Popery* is odious, and that by no Means without Cause, in the Ears of *Protestants*; and there

is nothing which is more likely to disgust and mislead the unwary Protestant Reader into a Prejudice against any Argument, than the pretending that it is friendly to *Popery*. But, if we lay aside Prejudices, and consider the Matter with equal and impartial Judgment, we shall see clearly that this Suggestion is groundless.

The *Sense of Protestants* concerning the Matter of *Creeds* and *Articles*, or the *Judgment of All Protestant Churches*, early and late, as to the *Reasonableness* and *Expediency* of what is contended for in these Papers, is fully declared by their several Practices; and a Verdict in favour of it, is far from being the Sense or Judgment of the Church of *England* only. Protestants at *Home*, whom the Differences of religious Sentiments about particular Doctrines have divided and sorted into various Denominations of Christians, are much of the same Mind in general, as to the *Reasonableness* at least, if not the *Necessity* of some *Explanation* or *Declaration* of their Faith; and, that Protestants *abroad* have approved *Creeds* and *Confessions*, there is abundant Witness. We have heard of *Creeds* and *Confessions* in great Plenty among them; as—the *Bohemian* or *Waldensian* Confession—the *Saxon* Confession
—the

—the *Wirtemberg* Confession—the *French Church's* Confession—the *Belgic* Confession—the *Helvetic* Confession—the *Palatine* Confession—the *Lithuanian*, or *Polish* Confession; —so that *foreign* Protestants also are justly chargeable with the Guilt, if there be any, of establishing Confessions or Creeds, as well as the *Church of England*. This sufficiently evidences, that the Practice, of which we are speaking, is not a *Popish* Practice; but that, on the contrary, it is a thing agreeable to, and approved by, the *Sense* and *Judgment* of the *Protestant World*; and, moreover, proves, that it is very unfair to object to those who write in Vindication of the Practice of the *Church of England* herein, as if they agreed with the *Church of Rome*, in maintaining an unlawful Practice, and, in so doing, ministered Strength to the Cause of Popery. *Secondly*, This Charge or Suspicion against the Defenders of the Church of England, will appear to be the more unreasonable and absurd, when it is considered, that several of the Articles of our Church are full and express, and directly levelled *against Popery*. *Thirdly*, If the whole System of Popery were totally abolished, still there would remain a Necessity

sity for *Creeds* and *Articles* in the *Church of England*, and among other *Protestants* also, as *Guards* and *Fences* against divers *Heretics*, *Heresies*, and *false Doctrines*. *Creeds* and *Articles* are *Guards* and *Fortresses* of the *Church of England*, against ALL her Enemies; and consequently it cannot be justly objected, that the Means of defending Ourselves against false *Doctrines* among Ourselves, which means are altogether unconnected with, and absolutely independent of, *Popery*, are—(*Risum teneatis?*)—a *Popish* Practice. *Fourthly*, and *Lastly*, There were *Creeds* and *Confessions* long before *Popery* came into Being, even in the first Days of Christianity, which shews what was the Judgment of Christians, even in the earliest Ages, in regard to the Reasonableness and Utility of the Thing itself.—*Creeds*, it is true, were originally designed for the Use of *Catechumens*: This was the original Use of them, in the primitive Age, though *Dr. Waterland* has asserted, that “*Creeds* were, at first, chiefly contrived as *Tests* against *Heresies*, and to guard the *Essentials of Faith* *.” It is true, that the most ancient *Creeds* did contain the

* Remarks upon *Dr. Clarke's Exposition of the Church-Catechism*, p. 34.

ESSENTIALS OF FAITH ; but it is not true, that they were, *at first*, contrived with this View. This was not the *first* Intention of Creeds. The Design of Creeds, *originally*, was *not* to be *Tests against Heresies*, or to *guard the Essentials of Faith* ; but to set forth, in a *summary Way*, the Fundamentals of the Christian Religion ; and therefore, it is not to be wondered at, that, in the most ancient Times, before dangerous Heresies, striking at the very Root of Christianity, sprang up, Creeds were very short, and of great Simplicity. But, in After-times, in proportion as Heresies increased and multiplied, and still more dangerous heretical Opinions and Doctrines than the former, were invented and propagated, Creeds were lengthened, and fraught with a greater Particularity of Explanation. To express this Matter in the Words of a great Man — “ Not long after the “ Apostles Days, and even in the Apostolic “ Age itself, several Heresies sprung up in “ the Church, subversive of the Fundamentals “ of Christianity ; to prevent the malignant “ Effects whereof, and to hinder such Here- “ tics from an undiscernible mixing them- “ selves with the Orthodox Christians, as

“ also to establish and strengthen the true
 “ Believers in the necessary Truths of the
 “ Christian Religion, the Christian Verities
 “ opposite to those Heresies, were inserted
 “ in the Creed; and, together with those
 “ other Articles, which had without any In-
 “ termission been constantly used from the
 “ Time of the Apostles, were proposed to the
 “ Assent and Belief of all Persons who came
 “ to be baptized: the Governors of the Church,
 “ judging this a prudent and an effectual
 “ Course, to preserve the Fundamentals of
 “ Religion from being undermined and over-
 “ thrown by cunning and subtle Heretics;
 “ which is the second Way by which the
 “ Creed was composed, *viz.* the Doctors and
 “ Governors of the Church did add unto
 “ those of the Apostles, other Articles, in
 “ Opposition to gross and fundamental Here-
 “ sies and Errors, as they appeared and grew
 “ up.” — And the same Author, after ha-
 ving cited *Ruffinus*, in Testimony of the
 Truth of what he had offered, adds, “ But
 “ there is no need of any further Testimonies
 “ to prove this Point at present, seeing a
 “ great Part of the ensuing Treatise will be
 “ an abundant Confirmation thereof.” To
 which

which he subjoins, “ I would not be here
 “ mistaken, as if I did mean that none of
 “ those Articles, which were introduced into
 “ the Creed, and settled there, in Opposition
 “ to *Heresies*, were ever used before, or de-
 “ manded at Baptism by the Administerer
 “ thereof; but my Meaning is, that every
 “ Church being at Liberty to express the
 “ fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith
 “ in that Way and Manner which she saw fit,
 “ *pro re nata*, or as Occasion offered; it is
 “ not improbable, but that, before damnable
 “ Heresies sprung up, they might not always
 “ to a Tittle follow the same Form of Words,
 “ nor exactly ask the same Questions *.” —
 Bishop *Bull*, among others, has shewn, that
 there were Creeds of public Use and Noto-
 riety, in both the *Eastern* and the *Western*
 Churches, *before* the Council of *Nice*; and
 he gives this Reason with Respect to the
 former, that they were wretchedly infested
 with *Hereses* †. Those ancient Creeds, it is
 true,

* *King's History of the Apostle's Creed, with critical Observations, &c. C. xi. p. 38, 39, 40. 4th Edit.*

† “ Non est dubitandum quin *Ecclesiæ Orientales*, ANTE
 “ *Synodum Nicænum*, *Symbolum suum habuerint, seu magis*
 “ *Symbola*

true, were not always of the same Length, without Addition or Interfection of certain particular Truths or Circumstantials, as Occasion required ; but they were *Creeds*, which is enough for my Purpose. And even that very Creed of which we have been discoursing, commonly called the *Apostles Creed*, which was, in Truth, no other than the *Roman Creed*, the Creed of that particular Church, was *originally* without several Articles which were afterwards put into it. This Creed was originally short, comparatively speaking ; and it was contrived to be so, for the Sake of a more easy and ready Repetition required at Baptism, and that it might be the more deeply imprinted in the Memory. The old *Roman*, which has passed under the Title of *The Apostles Creed*, was never brought into the Form in which it

“ *Symbola sua.*—De *Romana* quidem *Ecclesia*, quam secutæ
 “ sunt fere cæteræ *Occidentales*, expressa sunt Verba, a *Vos-*
 “ *fo* citata, *Vigilii*, *Lib. vi. de Eutyche.* —————
 “ Imò hisce *Ecclesiis*, multò magis necessarium fuit, ejus-
 “ modi Symbolum, quam *Ecclesiæ Romanæ*, ob Causam
 “ quam suprâ ex *Ruffino* Attuli, quòd scilicet illæ in pri-
 “ mis Sæculis miserè fuerint vexatæ ab Hæreticis ; qui
 “ *Romanæ Ecclesiæ* nullam Molestiam creârunt.” *B. p. Bull’s*
Judicium Eccles. Cathol. Cap. vi. Sect. 2.

now

now appears, until somewhat later than the Year 600; before that Time it was only as follows :

*I Believe in God, the Father Almighty; and in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord, who was born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary, and was crucified under PONTIUS PILATE, and was buried, and the third Day rose again from the Dead, ascended into Heaven, sitteth at the right Hand of God the Father, whence he shall come to judge the Quick and the Dead; and in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Church, the Remission of Sins, and the Resurrection of the Flesh. Amen.**

In few Words : As Heresies increased from the primitive Times, there was more Occasion proportionably, that Creeds should be longer, and more explicit and particular (*symbola latiora atque explicatiora*, as Bishop

* Bingham's Antiquities, Book x. Chap. 6.

Bull expresseſſes it) either as to *fundamental*, or to *eſſential*, or even to *neceſſary* Doctrines; and the Thing which made the *Athanaſian* Creed, as it is called, ſo long, expreſs, and *explicit*, as it is, was the Uſe and Neceſſity of ſuch a Creed, to oppoſe, and bear Teſtimony againſt *Cerinthians*, *Arians*, *Sabellians*, *Macedonians*, *Apollinarians*, *Nestorians*, *Eutychians*, and all other *Anti-Trinitarian* Hereſies. And, in general, Creeds, Articles, and Confeſſions of Faith, have been *Guards*, *Fences*, and *Fortreſſes* of the Church, in all Ages, againſt the manifold Attacks of Her Heretical Enemies:—And this, as may be obſerved by the Way, affords an eaſy Account, why all the Friends of Hereſy, of any Sect or Denomination, ſhould be, as they are, Enemies to Creeds and Articles: They are therefore *againſt* Creeds and Articles, becauſe Creeds and Articles are *againſt* them.

Whenever, therefore, any Perſon is diſpoſed to ſay, or think, that the Practice of the Church of *England*, in framing Creeds and Articles, copies the Practice of the Church of *Rome*, or reſembles the *Papal* Authority, let him correct the Error, by reflecting,

ing, that this Practice is much more ancient than Popery ; and that the thing is not a *Popish*, but a *Primitive Practice*, being conformable to the Practice and Example of the Church of *Christ*, even in the earliest and purest Ages.

It is not expected, that any Arguments, drawn from the Wisdom of Antiquity, or the Authority of the Practice of any Church or Churches, should have much Weight with you, *Diotrephes* ! Not with *you*, certainly, who have so openly, and so freely declared against the united Sentiments of the brightest Lights of Antiquity, and the authoritative Example of their Practice, for the Preservation and Security of the true Faith, against *Heresies* ; and therefore the more proper and eligible Method of debating the Point in Question with *you*, is to argue from the *Nature and Reason of the Thing itself*, rather than to attempt your Conviction by any Argument drawn from human Authority, or an Appeal to the Sense and Judgment of wise and good Men, or the Practice of Antiquity, or of any Churches. It may not, however, be useless, and it cannot be amiss, to endeavour to take off those

Prejudices,

Prejudices, which may, and probably have arisen in the Minds of many of your Readers, from your false and injurious Representation of the Advocates for Subscription, as being Defenders of the Church of *England* upon Principles which are maintained by, or Practices in Use amongst, our *Popish* Adversaries, and applied by them in support of their Errors : And because you are often aiming at Mischief, by employing the Terms *Popery* or *Popish*, where you want unfairly to discard, what you cannot fairly confute ; I desire that the following Question may be duly considered, *Who they are*, whose Way of Thinking and Arguing about Subscription to Creeds and Articles of Religion, favours, or tends to be of Advantage to the Cause of *Popery* : *They* who contend for such Subscription, or *they* who are desirous of setting it aside, and plead for a Repeal of the Law by which it is established, and are doing what lies in their Power towards a total Nullification of it ? *They* who contend for the Use and Expediency of what are the most effectual, and perhaps the only Means of preventing *Separations* and *Divisions* among Protestants, or *They* who are for rejecting

rejecting those Means, and thereby opening a Door to all Manner of *Divisions*, *Disturbances*, *Animosities*, and all their concomitant and consequent Evils?—That Divisions naturally tend to the Subversion, Dissolution, Destruction of all Government, and of all Society, and Peace, and Order, and Well-being of Mankind, is a Truth in *Reason*, taught by *Experience*, and confirmed by the *Authority* of a Law-giver of unerring Wisdom, *A City, or an House, divided against itself, cannot stand*. And I must confess, that, were I of the *Romish* Communion, and thought myself bound in Conscience to do whatever lay in my Power to compass the Ruin of the *Protestant* Cause, there is scarce any one Scheme, among all the cunningly-devised Machinations, and artful Contrivances of the Spirit of *Popery* against *Protestantism*, which I would adopt, as more likely to be successful and effectual to that Purpose, than the causing and promoting of *Dissentions* and *Divisions* among Protestants; who, when divided and separated among themselves, will easily fall a Prey into the Hands of the Enemy. Nor is there, in my Apprehension, at least,

least, any one Topic, with which *Papists*, and those of the *Romish* Communion, affect to insult Protestants with greater Plausibility of Argument, than that of the manifold religious Differences and Divisions among them ; which, they tell us, are the natural and unavoidable Consequences of our Separating ourselves from that Church, which, according to them, is the *Centre of Unity*, the alone *Pillar* (as they perversely misunderstand that Text, which relates not to the *Christian Church*, but to the *Person of Timothy*), and *Ground of the Truth*.

The Intention of these Observations upon the *Divisions* of Protestants is to shew, that they furnish our Adversaries of *Rome* with plausible and mischievous Arguments against us ; and, consequently, that whatever Scheme or Project tends to multiply or to create Division amongst us is a Scheme or Project, which is advantageous to the Cause of Popery.—Of your *Sincerity* in the Part which you have taken, in opposing what the Church of England has, as I take Leave to say, very wisely established, I judge not. But of this Fact, I am very certain,

certain, that, whatever any Man's *real Design* may be, the attempting to throw down the Bulwarks of the Church of *England*, and, in so doing, to leave her exposed and defenceless against the Attacks and Inroads of Popery, is to give Advantage to the Enemy, and to do Service to the Cause of Popery.

Learn, Sir, to be more sparing of your Censures of some of the most able Defenders of the Protestant Cause, and of the Church of England herself, as contending for the Establishment or the Practice of any Thing that looks favourably towards Popery *. In few Words,

* “ Those old Worthies, who predicted the Return of Popery, in Consequence of the Return of *Arminianism*, were not so widely mistaken, as to the Event, as may be imagined. They had good Reason to expect it, from the whole Conduct of LAUD and his Fellows. And though these were seasonably stopped in their Career, their Principles have been espoused and pursued by their Successors, in such Sort, as to give more than a suspicion to some competent Observers, that the *Church of England* has been, and is, though by Degrees *imperceptible* to vulgar Eyes, edging back once more towards Popery.” *Confessional*, p. 320 — 326. 3d Edit — But it is very perceptible to the Eyes of many competent Observers, that *Arianism*, *Deism*, and *religious Licentiousness* in Theory, as well as in Practice, are tending to lead us to, or threaten

Words, *what Church is it which owes you Thanks for your zealous Endeavours against Protestant Creeds and Articles ; or to whose Judgment shall this Matter be referred ?—* Did I believe that you were acting under a certain Disguise, as some who have argued against the Rights of the Church of *England* much after your Manner, have done before you, I might, perhaps, not scruple to say, without Ceremony,

*Referes ergo HÆC, et Nuncius ibis,
Pelidæ Genitori : ILLI mea tristia Faëta,
Degeneremque Neoptoleum, NARRARE ME-
MENTO.*

Go, tell HIS HOLINESS, that *you* have been endeavouring to remove those Articles of Religion, which have been presumptuously set up as Guards and Fences against His *Authority*, and that your Adversary is so degenerate *in the Way which He calls HERESY*, as to defend and maintain them.

ten us with, the *Return of Popery*.—It is remarked by the judicious Dr. *Waterland*, that “ *Arianism* is but the Dupe “ to *Deism*, as *Deism* is to *Popery*.” *Remarks on Dr. Clarke’s Exposition of the Church Catechism.*

But

But it is not, I say, expected, that Arguments drawn from the *Wisdom of Antiquity*, or from the Judgment and Practice of the Church of *England*, or of any Protestant Churches, whatever Weight they may have with *less considerable* * Persons than *yourself*, should

* “ *Judicium Ecclesie Christi universalis, omnium Temporum revereantur certè pii et sobrii omnes.*” — *B’p Bull’s Judicium Eccles. Cathol. Præmonit. ad Lectorem.*

“ Though I think it the most evident of all controverted Points, and indeed the sole Foundation of the Protestant Religion, that the *Scripture* is the *whole and only Rule of Truth* in Matters of Divine Revelation; and that all necessary and important Doctrines therein contained, may be well and sufficiently understood, by carefully comparing together the several Texts that relate to such Doctrines: yet, *as* it is necessary, in order to such a comparing of Texts, that a Man understand the Language wherein the Texts were written (or else that he be well assured of the Fidelity of the Translation, concerning which Matter I shall have Occasion presently to add something farther;”—[In p. 37. this Author takes Notice, “ that the Truth and Goodness of any *Translation* is made known to those who use it, not by the *Authority* of their particular Teachers, but by its having been examined and compared by Men of *different Opinions*, whose Interest has engaged them to discover Faults where there are any; by which Means, a Translation, in a free Country, cannot but be, in the main, agreeable to the Original.”] — “ and *as*, in order to his rightly understanding the particular

should be of much Moment with *you*, whose Superiority ranks you so much above them.

—What

“ Phrases and Idioms of that Language, it is very advise-
 “ able, that he consult the Commentaries of learned Di-
 “ vines, and consider the Reasons they offer for and against
 “ such and such Renderings of particular Phrases: So, con-
 “ cerning the ANCIENT FATHERS likewise, I agree it
 “ to be extremely adviseable, that as many as have Abili-
 “ ties, should consult *them* also, and take in all the Assis-
 “ tance they can from *their* Writings, by learning from
 “ them *the ancient Use of Phrases in the Language they wrote*
 “ *in, by finding the Opinions that prevailed in the several Times*
 “ *and Churches wherein they lived; and by considering care-*
 “ *fully the Reasons they allege, why particular Texts were, in*
 “ *their Days, understood in such and such particular Senses.*”
 —Dr Clarke’s Letter to Dr. Wells, in Answer to his Re-
 marks, &c. p. 22, 23. —He adds, I own, “ But now all
 “ this is not (in *Propriety* of Speech) ascribing any *Authority*
 “ to them.” But then this Author, in the very next Words,
 observes, that “ There is, indeed, a Sense of the Word, *Au-*
 “ *thority*, in which it may rightly be said, that the *primi-*
 “ *tive Writers* are of great *Authority* ;” —and that, “ as great
 “ *Learning*, so great *Antiquity* also carries with it, in this
 “ Sense, a *Sort of Authority* : Not a Power of obliging any
 “ Man to give his Assent *implicitly* ; but only a Power of
 “ so far influencing a Man’s Opinion, as the Author’s Skill
 “ in his own and the Scripture Language, and his better Know-
 “ ledge of the Facts which happened near his own Time, com-
 “ pared with what has at the same Time been said by other
 “ Writers, who had the same Advantages, ought to have its
 “ just Weight, among other Considerations, in determining the
 “ Judgment

—What is the Authority of *Fathers*, or *Doctors*, or *Councils*, or *Synods*, or *Churches*, when opposed to *your* Judgment, exalted, as you are, above them all, by a *Pre-eminence*, to which, since you yourself are the Builder of the Fabric, you have an indubitable Right! And therefore, methinks, there was but little Occasion for you to descend so low, as to have Recourse to that mean Piece of Artifice, of depressing others, in order to raise yourself: But the more you labour to bring down your Superiours, the lower, in the Opinion of all equitable and impartial Judges, will you yourself fall.—You have already dropped into low Company, such as the ever-infamous Author of *The Rights of the Christian Church*, and his Footman and Mimic *The Independent Whig*, and the whole Tribe of Freethinkers, falsely so called, being in Truth no other than Bigots to *No - Religion*; and that unchristian and irreligious Fraternity, who

“*Judgment of a reasonable and unprejudiced Man.*” *Ibid.* p. 24. — But is not the Authority, which Dr. *Clarke* here allows to the *antient* Writers, that very Authority which is meant by all *reasonable Persons*, when they speak of the *Authority of Antiquity*? And why this is not *Authority* in *PROPRIETY of Speech*, no Reason can be given.

stand

stand in Battle - array against the Church of England, under the despicable Ensigns of —what I care not to repeat,—and who, whenever the Mob are to be raised to their Assistance, and an *Odium* to be thrown on the Christian Ministry, never fail to trumpet forth the alarming Sounds, *Priestcraft ! Persecution !* and, more loudly still, *Popery ! Popery !*—In Page 317, you have, thro' the Fervency of your Zeal, grown quite eloquent, in Spite of Genius ; and your poignant Rhetoric is marvellously displayed in the following Figure—“ Who expelled Mr. *Whiston* ? The “ *Churchmen* of *Cambridge*. Who attempt-
 “ ed to proscribe Dr. *Clarke* ? The *Church-*
 “ *men* of the Lower House of *Convocation*.
 “ Who took Council against the Bishop of
 “ *Clogher* ? The great *Churchmen* of *Ireland*.
 “ Who prosecuted Dr. *Carter* in the Eccle-
 “ *siastical Court* ? ” &c. p. 399. *Quis Legem*
tulit ? Rullus. Quis majorem Partem Populi
Suffragiis privavit ? Rullus. Quis Comitibus
præfuit ? Rullus.—To your Piece of Ora-
 tory, I shall oppose the following, which
 has at least as much Eloquence, and a great
 deal more Sense in it. *Who* were the great
 Instruments

Instruments, under Providence, in bringing about the *Reformation*? The *Clergy*. *Who* have been the most able *Defenders of the Protestant Religion* against *Popery*? The *Clergy*. *Who* have been the longest *Affertors of Christian Liberty*, against the *tyrannical Claims and Pretensions of the Popish Hierarchy*? The *Clergy*.—I could go on, without knowing where to stop, in exemplifying the Advantages and Blessings which have been derived to this Protestant Country, through this Order of Men; but there is as little Occasion for me to dwell upon this Topic, when the Point is, to consider what is right or wrong as to the Matter of Subscription, as there is for you to speak of several eminent Defenders of the Church of England, in such a Manner as strongly tends to depreciate their Characters, and to prejudice Readers of the lower Rank at least against the sacred Order itself.

Considering the *Profaneness*, as well as the *Licentiousness*, of an Infidel Age, (an Age, in which it is the Fashion to treat Things Sacred and Holy with Contempt or Indifference) what Wonder, if an Order of Men, most highly useful to the Cause of God and Religion,

Religion, should meet with some Reproach from the Unholy and Profane ! or that Infidel Tongues and Pens, which are crucifying *the Son of God, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, afresh, and putting Him to an open Shame* ; what Wonder, if *Such* should employ their wretched Endeavours, to make His Ministers *a Scorn and Derision to them who are round about us, a Bye-word among the Heathen, a Shaking of the Head among the People* ! What Wonder, if such Malignants, and they who are in Confederacy with them, should pour forth some of their Venom against the Sacred Order of the Christian Ministry ! an Order and Character ! which

—ἐδ' αἰνεῖν τοῖσι κακοῖσι δέμῃς.

—*At Tu, Romane !*—

—*Non Hæc in Fœdera jungi.*

And now, having done with Preliminaries, I am prepared for an Encounter. What I affirm, then, is This, *That there is a Necessity for Explanatory Articles of Faith, and for Subscription to those Articles, as a Qualification for an Admission to the Office of the Christian Ministry.* And the Proof of this Proposition is contained in the following
Letter

Letter to Mr. Chandler. His Scheme was that of Subscription to a *Scripture Creed*, or a Creed composed of *the Words of Scripture only*, without any *Explanation*. Now, it must be observed, that the Argument used in that Letter, in Proof of the *Necessity* for Explanatory Articles, and for Subscription, as a *Qualification*, or, to speak more properly, as a *Test* of the Qualification, for the being admitted to the Office of the Ministry, is alike applicable to, and concludes with equal force against, *any other* Scheme of Subscription, which sets aside the *Necessity* of Explanation of the Words of Scripture, however different the Form or Manner of such Subscription may be—such as—*The Scriptures are the Word of God*,—or this, *The Scriptures contain All Things Necessary to Salvation*—or thus, *I promise to teach Nothing but what shall appear to Me, after proper Means of Information used, in the Search after Truth, to be the True Sense and Meaning of the Holy Scripture*—or any of the like Sorts of *General Declaration of Belief*, without any *Explanation* of it. The *Insufficiency* of All These, and of All Such-like Sorts of Subscription; to answer the True End and Design

of Subscription, and the Intent of the Church of England, in requiring it of those who are Candidates for the Office of the Ministry; is considered in that Letter: with what Strength of Reasoning the judicious Reader will determine. And, certainly, if the Argument for Explanatory Articles be conclusive against Mr. *Chandler*, who does allow, and even contend for, Subscription to *some Creed*, a Creed properly such, a certain Number of Propositions (made up of the very Words of Scripture) put together and forming a *Creed*, a Creed *in Form*, or a *Formulary*; the same Argument for Explanatory Articles must hold more strongly, if possible, against any-one who opposes and denies the *Necessity*, or the *Reasonableness*, or the *Expediency*, of any Creed; that is, any Subject of Assent, which can with Propriety, according to the Usage and Rule of Language, be called a *Creed*: And, therefore, the Argument, which was used against Mr. *Chandler*, is applicable, with at least an equal Fitness and Suitableness, to the *Author of The Confessional*.

The Argument, therefore, which is contained in the Letter to Mr. *Chandler*, hereto annexed; and (as I do not see any Impropriety

propriety in the Application) I will add, whatever in that Letter may be fitly applied, in Answer to any *material Position, Assertion, or Conclusion*, which is to be found in the *Confessional*; or the Whole Letter, throwing aside those Particulars, or Circumstantials, which concerned Mr. *Chandler*, and *Him only*, or which relate to anything for which that Author alone was accountable; in a Word, this Argument, with all the Reasoning which has been employed in the *Illustration, Proof, and Defense* of it, is now directed and applied to You, *Diotrephes*! And your Business, Sir, if you think fit to make your Appearance in Answer to what is applied to you, will be, not to declame about I know not what *Evils* and *Inconveniencies* attending the requiring of Subscription; or give *Hard Words*, which, at best, are but *Soft Arguments*; or to speak of Things which you disapprove, or of Persons whom you dislike, in a contemptuous Manner, as is your Way in the *Confessional*; or to ramble into foreign Countries, as your *Master*, Mr. *Chandler*, whose *Follower* you are, did before you, for something to say for Himself; and whose Example you imitate,

when

when you run to *Rome* and to *Portugal*, to pick up what you can find against *Civil Establishments of Religion*, which, after all, is Nothing to the Purpose, in regard to the Truth of the Argument in Debate, or to the *Reasonableness*, or *Unreasonableness*, of the Church of *England* in requiring Subscription (and it is but arguing from the *Abuses* of Subscription against the *Right Use* of it; which is just as impertinent and illogical, as it would be, to argue from Mr. *Hobbs's* absurd *Misapplication* of *Mathematical Principles* against the Truth of *Newton's Principia*);—your Business, Sir, is to *Reason*, and to keep close to Point of *Argument*; either, therefore, shew something wrong in *Premises*, or false in *Conclusion*, in the Argument for Explanatory Articles of Faith, which is contained in the Letter to Mr. *Chandler*; or confess, as it becomes a fair and ingenuous *Confessionalist* to do, That you give up the Question.

4 OC 58

